equal benefit of all laws and proceedings for the security of person and property as was enjoyed by white citizens. The bill had nothing to do with " social equality " and did not in any way interfere with Mr. Johnson's scheme of reconstruction. In fact, it was asserted, no doubt truthfully, that Mr. Johnson himself had at various times shown himself by word and act favorable to its provisions. It appeared, indeed, in every one of its features so reasonable and so necessary for the enforcement of the 13th Constitutional Amendment prohibiting slavery that disapproval of it by the President was regarded as almost impossible. Aside from the merits of the bill, there was another reason, a reason of policy, for the President to sign it. Had he done so he would have greatly encouraged the conciliatory spirit which in spite of all that had happened, was still flickering in many Republican bosoms, and he might thus, even at this late hour, have secured an effective following among the Republicans in Congress. But he did not. He returned the bill to Congress with a veto message so weak in argument that it appeared as if he had been laboriously groping for pretexts to kill the bill. One of the principal reasons he gave was again the sinister one that Congress had passed the bill while eleven States were unrepresented, thus repeating the threatening hint that the validity of the laws made by such a Congress might be questioned.

Congress promptly passed the bill over the

President's veto by a two-thirds majority in each House, and thus the Civil Rights Bill became a law. President Johnson's defeat was more fatal than appeared on the surface. The prestige he had won by the success of his veto of the Freedmen's Bureau Bill was lost again. The Republicans, whom in some way he had led to expect that he would sign the Civil Rights Bill, now believed him to be an insincere man, capable of any treachery.